# IKEA US - Diversity & Inclusion – LGBTQ+

## Glossary of Terms

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This information sheet is a list of common terms related to the LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender, queer and people of all sexual orientations and gender identities) community. Inclusive behaviors need to use the language and understanding of people from different backgrounds, and how they want to be seen - this glossary helps with these goals.

This glossary is provided to assist with education and expanding knowledge of acceptable and unacceptable use of language; however, this list should not be considered as the only terminology that is recognized by IKEA. Notice that some of the terms have synonyms (e.g. asexual/grey-a) with the common terms listed together. If additional terminology is used and/or not part of this list, it is suggested that any Co-worker or management team member contact their local Diversity & Inclusion Ambassador for assistance and guidance.

**This glossary reflects the most current language at the time of this update; awareness that language is constantly changing is important. This glossary is a starting place for awareness. If you believe that something needs to be updated, please contact US EDI Equality Diversity Inclusion.**

**AFAB**: (pronounced ā-fab) Acronym meaning Assigned Female at Birth. AFAB people may or may not identify as female all of the time. AFAB is a useful term for educating about issues that may happen to these bodies without connecting to womanhood or femaleness. (example of use: "I was AFAB and grew up socialized female which has impacted me through the ways that I have expectations for myself speaking up at work.")

**AGAB:** (pronounced ā-gab) Acronym meaning Assigned (or Alleged) Gender at Birth. (example of use: As a gender expansive person, I think less about my AGAB and more about the agency I have to express and live in alignment with my identity now.)


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**A-Gender:** (pronounced ā-ˈ jen-dər) A-gender identity describes a person who does not identify with any gender. Refers to a person who does not identify with or experience any gender. Agender is different from non-binary (see *Non-binary*)

**Ally:** A term relating generally to individuals who support marginalized groups. In the LGBTQ+ community, this term is used to describe someone who is supportive of LGBTQ+ individuals and the community, either personally or as an advocate. Allies include both heterosexual and cisgender people who advocate for equality in partnership with LGBTQ+ people, as well as people within the LGBTQ+ community who advocate for others in the community. "Ally" is not an identity, and allyship is an ongoing process of learning that includes action.

**AMAB**: (pronounced ā-mab) Acronym meaning Assigned Male at Birth. AMAB people may or may not identify as male all of the time. AMAB is a useful term for educating about issues that may happen to these bodies without connecting to manhood or maleness. (example of use: "The experiences of AMAB non-binary folks in the workplace is different than those of transwomen."

**Androgynous/Androgyny:** See Gender Expression. Having physical elements of both or neither femininity and/or masculinity, whether expressed through sex, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation. Androgyne (pronounced an-druh-jain ) is another term for an androgynous individual.

**Androsexual:** Refers to a person who regardless of their gender identity is sexually or romantically attracted to masculinity. Inverse is Gynosexual.

**Aromantic**: Sometimes abbreviated as Aro (pronounced ā-row), the term refers to an individual who does not experience romantic attraction. Aromantic people exist on a spectrum of romantic attraction and can use terms such as gray aromantic or grayromantic to describe their place within that spectrum. Aromantic people can experience sexual attraction.

**Asexual /Grey-A**: Sometimes abbreviated as Ace, the term refers to an individual who does not experience sexual attraction. An asexual person may experience relationships, attraction, and arousal. Asexuality is distinct from chosen behavior such as celibacy or sexual abstinence; asexuality is a sexual orientation that does not necessarily entail specific chosen behaviors. Asexual people exist on a spectrum of sexual attraction and can use terms such as gray asexual or gray ace to describe themselves.

**Assuming Gender**: The act of making assumptions about an individual's gender, based on their legal gender marker or physical attributes and expressed characteristics. Examples of assuming a person's gender include using pronouns for a person before learning what pronouns they use, or calling a person a man or a woman without knowing their gender.


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**Augmentation: (short for Breast Augmentation):** Some AMAB individuals choose to have breast augmentation as a part of their gender-affirming care.

**Bi-curious**: A term used to identify a person who is interested in exploring their attraction to people of a variety of genders. This term can imply that sexual orientation is something that must be explored sexually and romantically before it can be determined (see *Heteroflexible*). Many bisexual-identified people feel that this term invalidates their identity by implying that it is a questioning or an exploratory phase.

**Bigender**: While gender is now widely understood to be a spectrum and not on a binary, this is a term used to identify a person whose gender identity encompasses two genders, (often man and woman, but not exclusively) or is moving between two genders. More commonly used terms include genderfluid (see *Genderfluid*) or genderqueer (see *Genderqueer*), which better reflect the spectrum of all genders.

**BIPOC**: Acronym for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. It acknowledges the specific histories of Black, Latinx, Asian Pacific Islanders (API), and Native people within the United States without collapsing them into a homogenous category of people of color.

**Binding**: The process of tightly wrapping one's chest in order to minimize the appearance of having breasts, often by using a binder, often supporting gender-expression for AFAB folks who identify as trans-masc and some non-binary individuals. Note: One must bind themselves carefully, with appropriate materials, and for reasonable periods of time in order to avoid discomfort and potential negative health impacts. Unsafe binding can lead to negative health outcomes, such as broken ribs and trouble breathing.

**Bioessentialism**: Short for biological essentialism. Reliance or weaponization of biology in an attempt to disprove trans people's genders. Common bioessentialist arguments reduce people to their chromosomes (though there are more than 30 chromosome combinations that people have); their genitalia (though there are many natural variations; or their binary gender (though gender and sex are not binary). For example: use in anti-trans/non-binary legislation.

**Biological Sex:** Often also referred to as sex, physical sex, anatomical sex. Biological sex refers to anatomical, physiological, genetic, or physical attributes that determine if a person is male, female, or intersex. These include both primary and secondary sex characteristics, including genitalia, gonads, hormone levels, hormone receptors, chromosomes, and genes. Biological sex is often confused with or interchanged with gender, which is a social construct, and involves personal identity factors.


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**Biphobia/Biphobic:** Hatred, dislike or animosity of bisexual people (see *Bisexual*) which may manifest in the form of prejudice or bias and result in discrimination. Biphobia often stems from lack of knowledge about bisexual people and the issues they face, and can sometimes be alleviated with education and support

**Bisexual:** Commonly referred to as Bi. A person who acknowledges in themselves the potential to be attracted--romantically, emotionally and/or sexually--to people of more than one gender, not necessarily at the same time, in the same way, or in the same degree. People who identify as bisexual may not have equal sexual or romantic experience, equal levels of attraction, nor any experience at all with people across genders to be bisexual.

**Bottom Surgery**: (also may be called Lower Surgery) Surgery performed on an individual's reproductive system as a part of gender-affirming surgery. (See *Gender-Affirming Surgery*.) Not all trans or non-binary people elect to have gender-affirming surgery. Trans and non-binary people retain the right not to discuss their surgical history or intentions.

**Butch**: A person who is masculine of center in dress, attitude, and/or presentation. It is often, but not exclusively, used in a lesbian context. Often on a spectrum from butch to femme (see *Femme*) or stud (see *Stud*) to femme.

**Chosen Family**: Also known as Found Family, people who support an LGBTQ+ person, who are not biologically related, and who often fill the role of the biological family if an LGBTQ+ person's family is not supportive of them.

**Chosen Name:** The name a trans or non-binary person uses to refer to themselves that is different than their deadname (see deadname). This is the name that should be used for the individual. Use of someone's chosen name both affirms their identity and creates a safer and more inclusive environment.

**Cisgender:** (pronounced sis-gender) When an individual's gender identity aligns with their sex assigned at birth. Cisgender people should avoid calling themselves or referring to cisgender people as "normal" and instead refer to themselves as cisgender or cis.

**Cisgender Privilege:** Unearned advantages that automatically favour those who are cisgender and disadvantages people of other gender identities. Typically, most people assume that everyone is cisgender, and are insensitive or unaware of the daily hardships faced by transgender individuals. Some examples of cisgender privilege are having the gender you identify with available on intake forms or systems like GlobalView, having bathrooms available that align with your gender identity, etc.


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**Cisnormativity**: The assumption that everyone is cisgender is the norm and that other genders are "different" or "abnormal."

**Cissexism**: Prejudice, stereotyping, or discrimination on the basis of sex, specifically towards transgender and gender-expansive people (see *Transphobia*).

**Civil Union/Domestic Partnership:** Different types of legally recognised same-sex relationships. These are typically not equal to marriage because they are not recognised globally, are much harder to establish, cost more money in legal fees, and in some countries do not include over 1000 rights that are automatically given to married heterosexual couples.

**Clocked/Being Clocked:** A term used by the transgender community to mean that someone has identified them as being transgender when they have not disclosed their identity, and the person has malintent. Being clocked can create a lot of anxiety for transgender individuals because they can face bias, harassment, and danger when they are identified. This is primarily an in-group term used within the transgender community; it is a term to be used as primarily a self-description of experience and not to be used by cisgender people to describe or inquire.

**Closeted**: Describes a person who is not open about their sexual orientation or gender identity. A closeted person may be referred to as being "in the closet." There are many degrees to being out/closeted; closeted individuals may be out (see *Out*) to just themselves, close friends, or to their larger network, or not publicly open about their status as LGBTQ+ people.

**Coming Out**: For LGBTQ+ people, coming out is the process of self-identifying and self-acceptance that entails the sharing of their identity with others. Sometimes referred to as disclosing (see *Disclosure*). Individuals often recognize a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender/gender-expansive, or queer identity within themselves first, and then might choose to reveal it to others. There are many different degrees of being out, and coming out is a lifelong process. It is critical to respect where each person is within their process of self-identification, and up to each person, individually, to decide if and to whom to come out or disclose.

**Culturally Queer**: Individuals who are often raised in the queer community and learn about society primarily through a queer lens, and experience heterosexual culture and its norms as a secondary cultural influence. (eg. Children of queer-identified parents)

**Deadnaming**: Occurs when an individual, intentionally or not, refers to the name that a transgender or gender-expansive individual used at a different time in their life. Avoid this


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practice, as it can cause trauma, stress, embarrassment, and even danger. Some may prefer the terms birth name, given name, or old name.

**Demiromantic**: Used to describe an individual who experiences romantic attraction only after forming an emotional connection.

**Demisexual**: Used to describe an individual who experiences sexual attraction only after forming an emotional connection.

**Demiboy**: A person whose gender identity is only partly male, regardless of their assigned sex at birth.

**Demigirl**: A person whose gender identity is only partly female, regardless of their assigned sex at birth.

**Disclosure**: A word that some people use to describe the act or process of revealing one's transgender or gender-expansive identity to another person in a specific instance. Some find the term offensive, implying the need to disclose something shameful, and prefer to use the term coming out, whereas others find coming out offensive, and prefer to use disclosure. (example: "I have already disclosed to my manager that I identify as transgender.")

**Drag King:** A person who performs masculine roles theatrically. (see Drag)

**Drag Queen:** A person who performs feminine roles theatrically. (see Drag)

**Drag**: The theatrical performance of one or multiple genders (often including makeup, costume, dance, lip-syncing, and temporary body modifications). Performers who present in a feminine manner are called Drag Queens, while performers who present in a masculine manner are called Drag Kings. These performances often push traditional boundaries of gender presentation, calling into question societally defined gender roles. This is distinct from being a trans person, the distinction is driven by the act of theater/entertainment versus someone's gender identity and gender expression.

**Dysmorphia:** Short for Body dysmorphia, dysmorphia is a mental health condition in which a person cannot stop thinking about one or more perceived defects or flaws in appearance. People of all genders can experience dysmorphia. For example, body dysmorphia can be present for people experiencing an eating disorder when they perceive their body to be much bigger than it is. Dysmorphia is a condition which is separate and different from body dysphoria (see below).

**Dysphoria:** Short for Gender Dysphoria, dysphoria is a distressed state arising from conflict between a person's gender identity and the sex they were assigned at birth. The experience of having dysphoria has been a requirement to access some gender affirming care, though increasing recognition is developing that gender affirming care should not require pathologizing patients.


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**Femme**: A person who is feminine of center in dress, attitude, and/or presentation. It is often, but not exclusively, used in a lesbian context. Often on a spectrum from butch (see *Butch*) to femme or stud (see *Stud*) to femme.

**Folx**: An alternative spelling to folks. The two words are pronounced the same way. Folx is viewed by some as a more inclusive version of the word folks, though both are gender-neutral ways of addressing a group of people.

**FTM/F2M**: An abbreviation of Female to Male; a transgender man. This term can be interpreted as reinforcing the binary; it is a term for someone to refer to themselves.

**FTX/F2X**: A genderqueer or gender-expansive person assigned female at birth.

**Gatekeeping**: A broad term, not only used within the LGBTQ+ community, which describes the process by which an individual decides who does or does not belong to a certain community, group, or identity.

- Interpersonal example: A gay man telling a questioning man that he has to have sex with another man before he can call himself gay.
- Systemic example: Trans and Non-Binary folks being required to receive letters from therapists in order to receive gender affirming care such as hormones or surgery.

**Gay**: A term used to describe people who are emotionally, romantically, and/or physically attracted to people of the same gender (e.g., gay man, gay people). In contemporary contexts, lesbian is often a preferred term for women, though many women use the term gay to describe themselves. The term should not be used as an umbrella term for LGBTQ+ people, e.g. "the gay community," because it excludes other sexual orientations and genders. The use of "gay" as a synonym for bad, e.g. "that's so gay" is disparaging and derogatory.

**Gayby**: A person with one or more LGBTQ+ parent or caregiver. A term used for self-identification only.

**Gender**: Broadly, gender is a set of socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate (see *Social Construction Theory*).

**Gender-Affirming Care (GAC):** An encompassing term to describe the holistic care provided for transgender, non-binary and gender expansive people. This term includes medical care, mental health care, legal support as well as other forms of care which ensure that systems, spaces and communication are inclusive and support transgender, non-binary and gender expansive people in feeling happy and safe. GAH and GAS are parts of gender-affirming medical care.

**Gender-Affirming Hormones (GAH):** Hormones used to support people's gender identity through feminizing or masculinizing effects. There is no "standard" dose, and


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individuals may choose to "micro-dose" seeking only minimal effects. Transgender or non-binary folks may elect to use gender-affirming hormones.

**Gender-Affirming Surgery (GAS)**: Surgical procedures that can help people adjust their bodies to match their innate gender identity more closely. This term is more accepted and current than gender-confirmation surgery, and should be used instead of gender reassignment or sex reassignment surgery which are outdated and terms which should be avoided due to their reinforcement that there is one way to medically transition and reliance on the binary. Not every transgender person will desire or have resources for gender-affirming surgery. (See also *Top Surgery* and *Bottom Surgery*).

**Gender Binary**: The disproven concept that there are only two genders, male and female, and that everyone must be one or the other. Also often misused to assert that gender is biologically determined. This concept also reinforces the idea that men and women are opposites and have different roles in society (see *Gender Roles*).

**Gender Dysphoria:** The state of distress felt by some transgender and/or non-binary individuals caused by the mismatch between their sex assigned at birth and their inner sense of gender identity. Typically, healthcare professionals in many countries need to make a diagnosis of gender dysphoria in order to approve gender affirming care such as GAH/GAS. However, this diagnosis is not needed for surgeries in all countries, and not all transgender individuals experience gender dysphoria or want to physically transition. See *Gender Transition.*

**Gender Euphoria**: A euphoric feeling often experienced when one's gender is recognized and respected by others, when one's body aligns with one's gender, or when one expresses themselves in accordance with their gender. Focusing on gender euphoria instead of gender dysphoria shifts focus towards the positive aspects of being transgender, non-binary or gender expansive.

**Gender Expansive**: An umbrella term sometimes used to describe people who expand notions of gender expression and identity beyond perceived or expected societal gender norms. Some gender-expansive individuals identify as a mix of genders, some identify more binarily as a man or a woman, and some identify as no gender (see *agender*). Gender-expansive people might feel that they exist among genders, as on a spectrum, or beyond the notion of the man/woman binary paradigm. Sometimes gender-expansive people use gender-neutral pronouns (see *Pronouns*), but people can exist as any gender while using any pronouns. They may or may not be comfortable with their bodies as they are, regardless of how they express their gender.

**Gender Expression**: The way a person communicates about gender to others through external means such as clothing, appearance, or mannerisms. This communication may be conscious or subconscious and may or may not reflect their gender identity or sexual orientation. While most people's understandings of gender expressions relate to masculinity and femininity, there are countless combinations that may incorporate both


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masculine and feminine expressions—or neither—through androgynous expressions. An individual's gender expression does not automatically imply one's gender identity. All people have gender expressions.

**Gender Fluid:** Gender fluid is a gender identity which refers to a gender which varies over time. A gender fluid person may at any time identify as male, female, neutrois, or any other non-binary identity, or some combination of identities. Their gender can also vary at random or vary in response to different circumstances. Gender fluid people may also identify as multigender, non-binary and/or transgender. Gender fluid people who feel that the strength of their gender(s) change(s) over time, or that they are sometimes a-gender, may identify as gender flux.

**Gender Identity:** A person's psychological experience and inner sense of gender. The dominant narrative way of categorising gender tends to be binary: woman and man. However, we now know there are many different genders. For example, there are cultures that have long recognised more than two genders. Additionally, there are people all over the world who perceive their inner sense of gender as being different than their biological sex. It is always important to respect how people want to self-identify, not what you see their gender as. Gender identity can also vary over time. See *Gender Fluid*.

**Gender Neutral**: Not gendered. Can refer to language (including pronouns and salutations/titles—see Gender-neutral salutations or titles), spaces (like bathrooms), or other aspects of society (like colors or occupations). Gender neutral is not a term to describe people (see *Gender Expansive*). A person who experiences no gender may be agender (see Agender) or neutrois (see *Neutrois*).

**Gender-Neutral Salutations or Titles**: A salutation or title that does not specify the gender of the addressee in a formal communication or introduction. Also used for persons who do not identify as a binary gender, addressing someone where the gender is unknown, or if the correspondence-sender is unsure of the gender of the person to whom the correspondence is being sent.

- Mx. (pronounced mix) and M. are the most commonly used gender-neutral title (e.g. "Dear Mx. Smith…" or "Hello M. Moore…:). Generally, M. is used when the gender is unknown, and Mx. is used when the person uses that prefix.
- Avoid salutations that are gendered such as "Hey guys" when you either know the group is mixed gender, or you are not sure how the group identifies. Alternatives: Folks, folx, people, people of all genders, team (if relevant), humans.

**Gender Nonconforming (GNC)**: A term for those who do not follow gender stereotypes. Often an umbrella for nonbinary genders (see *TGNC*). Though fairly uncommon, some people view the term as derogatory, so they may use other terms including gender expansive, differently gendered, gender creative, gender variant, genderqueer, nonbinary, agender, genderfluid, gender neutral, bigender, androgynous, or gender


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diverse. A more inclusive term is gender expansive. It is important to respect and use the terms people use for themselves, regardless of any prior associations or ideas about those terms.

**Gender Normative:** Following mainstream gender roles, expectations, and behaviours within one's culture and society that typically fit feminine and masculine stereotypes.

**Gender Performance Theory**: Coined by Judith Butler, gender performance theory is the concept that people do not have inherent genders based on their biological sex. According to this theory, people continually perform their genders, instead of relying on their assigned sexes to determine their genders for them.

**Gender-queer/Gender-fluid :** Gender identities that describe people who experience their gender as a mix of other genders, and/or changing between different genders throughout their lives or in different situations. Gender-queer and gender-fluid are subcategories within the overall transgender group.

**Gender Roles**: The strict set of societal beliefs that dictate the so-called acceptable behaviors for people of different genders, usually binary in nature. Many people find these to be restrictive and harmful, for LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ people alike, as they reinforce the gender binary (see *Gender Binary*).

**Gender Socialization**: A process that influences and teaches an individual how to behave as a man or a woman, based on culturally defined gender roles (see *Gender Roles*). Parents, teachers, peers, media, and faith traditions are some of the many agents of gender socialization. Gender socialization looks very different across cultures, both inside and outside of the U.S. It is heavily impacted by other intersecting identities (see *Intersectionality*).

**Gender Spectrum**: The concept that gender exists beyond a simple man/woman binary model (see *Gender Binary*), but instead exists on a continuum. Some people fall towards more masculine or feminine aspects, some people move fluidly along the spectrum, and some exist off the spectrum entirely.

**Gender X:** A gender demographic option available in some US states and expected to begin to be available on the US Passport in 2022.

**Gynosexual:** Refers to a person who regardless of their gender identity is sexually or romantically attracted to femininity. Inverse of Androsexual

**Heteroflexible**: A straight person who is most often attracted to people of a different gender from themselves but sometimes experiences attraction to people of the same


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gender as them. It is distinct from bisexuality. The term can have negative connotations of experimentation or indecision (see *Bi-curious*).

**Heteronormative:** Cultural rules and expectations that assume everyone is heterosexual and drive people to follow heterosexual ways of behaving and seeing the world. It typically refers to the unconscious biases about sexuality and its privileges that people are now aware of. See *Heterosexual Privilege*.

**Heterosexual/Straight:** People who identify as male who are attracted only to female-identified people, and female-identified people who are attracted only to male-identified people. Folks who are cisgender or another gender may be heterosexual/straight.

**Heterosexual Privilege :** Unearned advantages that automatically favour those who are heterosexual and disadvantages people of other sexual orientations.

**Homophobia/Homophobic:** Bias against gay, lesbian, queer and other non-heterosexual people.

**Homosexual**: A term to describe gay, lesbian, or queer people which may be offensive depending on the speaker. Originally used as a scientific or clinical term to describe LGBTQ+ people, the word has been reclaimed by the LGBTQ+ community and may be colloquially used by an LGBTQ+ person to reference themselves or another member of the community. Non-LGBTQ+ people should avoid using the term.

**Homoflexible**: A gay person who is most often attracted to people of the same gender as themselves but sometimes experience attraction to people of other genders or engage in sexual behavior with people of different genders from their own. It is distinct from bisexuality (see *Bisexual*) and is a self-identified term, not a term to use for someone else.

**Hormone Blockers (also referred to as *Puberty Blockers*)**: Medical treatment which allows young trans and gender-expansive people to affirm their gender identity and can prevent the potentially negative outcomes of going through a puberty that does not match their gender identity.

**Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT)**: See Gender Affirming Hormones

**House-Ballroom Community**: The underground subculture consisting of mainly Black and Latinx members of the LGBTQ+ community who 'walk' to earn recognition and awards within their community. 'Houses' are chosen families that individuals compete with and often live with (see *Chosen Family*).These categories represent the barriers that Queer and Trans People of Color (*QTPOC*) face in accessing formal employment, housing, and public services.


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**Hijra /3rd Gender:** A South Asian term in countries like Indian, Bangladesh, and Indonesia that refers to individuals who do not identify as women or men. They are sometimes referred to as 3rd gender individuals. There are long cultural histories of hijras living together in communities and regularly participating in cultural rituals and performances. Most hijras are born with genitals that are neither female nor male, which fits more with the western concept of intersex as opposed to transgender. However, transgender has also been used to define hijra. In India, official government documents now have 3rd gender as a gender demographic option to recognise hijras.

**Hyperfemininity**: Term for the exaggeration of stereotypically female behavior, based on so-called gender roles (see *Gender Roles*). Hyperfeminine behavior is often expected of trans women in order to be seen as "real" women.

**Hypermasculinity**: Term for the exaggeration of stereotypically male behavior, based on so-called gender roles (see *Gender Roles*). Hypermasculine behavior is often expected of trans men in order to be seen as "real" men. Heterosexual men may display hypermasculine behaviors to "prove" that they are not gay, even though gay men have many understandings of their own masculinity.

**Hysterectomy:** A surgical procedure to remove the uterus in someone who was Assigned Female At Birth (AFAB). This may or may not include the removal of the ovaries and/or the cervix. Some individuals choose to retain their ovaries in order to preserve fertility.

**Inclusive Language**
The words that we use in speech and writing that are sensitive to differences in sexual orientation and gender identity. For example, using the word partner instead of husband and wife is inclusive of all relationships. Or saying 'they,' 'all genders,' instead of 'she/he,' 'both genders,' and 'women and men,' to show understanding and acceptance that there are more than two genders.

**Intersectionality**: Coined by Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, this term refers to the overlap of social categorizations or identities such as race and ethnicity, sexuality, gender, disability, geography, and class which exist in an individual or group of people that can contribute to discrimination or disadvantage.

**Intersex**: Intersex is the current term used to refer to people who are biologically between the medically expected definitions of male and female. This can be through variations in hormones, chromosomes, internal or external genitalia, or any combination of any or all primary and/or secondary sex characteristics. While many intersex people are noticed as intersex at birth, many are not. As intersex is about biological sex, it is distinct from gender identity and sexual orientation. An intersex person can be of any gender identity and can also be of any sexual orientation and any romantic orientation. The Intersex Society of North America opposes the practice of genital mutilation on infants and children who are intersex.


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**Kinsey Scale**: A scale developed in the 1940s by Alfred Kinsey which places an individual's sexual orientation on a spectrum from 0 (exclusively heterosexual) to 6 (exclusively homosexual). The scale included the measurement "X" which indicated an absence of sexual behavior. The scale was an early recognition of fluid sexual orientation and was credited with challenging the heterosexual/homosexual binary. This model is considered outdated as it reinforces a binary expression of opposite to same sex attraction.

**Klein Grid:** In response to the criticism of the Kinsey scale only measuring two dimensions of sexual orientation, the Klein grid was developed with a multidimensional grid for describing sexual orientation. Unlike the Kinsey scale, the Klein grid investigates sexual orientation in the past, present, as well as in the idealized future with respect to 7 values of 1-7, for a total of twenty-one values.

**Latinx**: (Pronounced Latin-ex or la-TEEN-ex) An inclusive, gender-neutral term--sometimes used in place of the gendered, binary terms Latino or Latina--used to describe a person of Latin-American origin or descent. While many in the progressive space use this term, there is not widespread adoption of this term. Also used: Latine

**Lesbian**: Refers to a woman who is emotionally, romantically, and/or physically attracted to other women. People who are lesbians need not have had any sexual experience: Attraction and self-identification determines orientation, not the gender or sexual orientation of one's partner.

**LGBTQ+**: An acronym that collectively refers to individuals who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer, sometimes stated as LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) or, historically, GLBT (gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender). The addition of the Q for queer is a more recently preferred version of the acronym as cultural opinions of the term queer focus increasingly on its positive, reclaimed definition (see *Queer*). The Q can also stand for questioning, referring to those who are still exploring their own sexuality and/or gender. The "+" represents those who are part of the community, but for whom LGBTQ does not accurately capture or reflect their identity.

**Lifestyle**: An offensive term used to describe LGBTQ+ people's sexual orientation and gender expression/identity as a "choice."

**Masc:** A shortened term for "masculine" primarily used to self-define.

**Misgender**: To refer to someone using a word, especially a pronoun or form of address, which does not correctly reflect their gender. This may be unintentional and without ill intent or can be a maliciously employed expression of hate. Regardless of intent, misgendering has a harmful impact and is a form of microaggression.

**Misogynoir**: A term coined by queer Black feminist Moya Bailey to describe misogyny directed towards Black women where race and gender both play roles in bias.


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**Mispronoun**: Similar to misgendering (see *Misgender*), mispronouning is to refer to a person with the incorrect pronouns. This term is less common than misgendering. This may be unintentional and without ill intent, or can be a maliciously employed. Regardless of intent, mispronouning has a harmful impact and is a microaggression.

**MLM**: Men Loving Men, refers to gay, bisexual, pansexual or otherwise same-gender loving men. Used most commonly within the Black community, the term is more often written than used in conversation.

**Masculine of Center (MOC):** A term typically used to self-identify which places an individual's gender expression towards masculine rather than feminine of center or androgyny. An individual may identify as cisgender, transgender, non-binary or another gender identity and use this term to self-identify.

**Monogamous**: A term referring to individuals who are intimate or involved romantically with one person at a time.

**Monosexism**: The opinion that being attracted to one gender is superior to being attracted to multiple genders.

**Monosexual**: People who only experience attraction to one gender. Examples of monosexual groups include gay men, lesbians, and straight people.

**MSM**: Men Who Have Sex with Men. Reports on STIs and public health commonly use this term, although those who identify as MSM might or might not identify as members of the LGBTQ+ community. This designation often allows discrimination against GBTQ+ men, for example in blood donation.

**MTF/M2F:** Abbreviations for Male-to-Female, a transgender woman. This term can be interpreted as reinforcing the binary; it is a term for someone to refer to themselves.

**MTX/M2X**: A genderqueer or gender-expansive person assigned male at birth.

**Nibling**: A gender-neutral term for niece/nephew.

**Non-binary**: Refers to people who do not identify on the gender binary. They might exist between or beyond the man-woman binary. Some use the term exclusively, while others may use it interchangeably with terms like genderqueer (see *Genderqueer*), genderfluid (see *Genderfluid*), gender nonconforming (see *Gender Nonconforming*), gender diverse, or gender expansive. It can also be combined with other descriptors e.g. a non-binary woman or transmasc non-binary identified. It's important to trust and respect the words that nonbinary people use to describe their genders and experiences. Non-binary people may understand their identity as falling under the transgender umbrella, but not all do. Sometimes abbreviated as NB or Enby, the term NB has historically been used to mean non-Black, so those referring to non-binary people should avoid using NB.


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**Non-binary Lesbian**: A term to describe a nonbinary person whose primary romantic, emotional and/or sexual attraction is to women. Lesbianism has historically included people of varying gender expressions (see *Butch*, *Stud* and *Femme*) and people with varying relationships to the lesbian community (before bisexual and pansexual came into common use, any woman who felt romantic, emotional and/or sexual attraction to women was considered a lesbian). This combination of terms came about due to the lack of a specific term for a nonbinary person who is only attracted to one gender.

**Non-Op:** A term that describes trans, non-binary or gender expansive folks who do not elect to have surgery. This term is one for folks to refer to themselves only. Folks who identify as non-op may still elect to receive gender affirming hormones or other forms of gender affirming care.

**Omnisexual**: Refers to a person who recognizes the gender of those to whom they feel an emotional, romantic and/or physical attraction but it does not play a factor in partner choice. This term differs from *pansexual* (see *Pansexual*), in that people who are pansexual are also emotionally, romantically, and physically attracted to people of all genders, but do not notice their partner's gender.

**Oophrectomy:** A surgical procedure to remove the ovaries in someone Assigned Female At Birth. This may or may not be chosen in connection with a hysterectomy.

**Opposite Sex**: Inaccurate descriptor of gender and/or sex, implying that there are only two genders that oppose one another, and biological sexes are also not opposites (see Intersex). Better terms include "different gender" or AMAB/AFAB, depending on context.

**Orchiectomy:** (abbreviated: "Orchie") A surgical procedure to remove the testes from someone Assigned Male At Birth (AMAB).

**Out/Being Out**: A term which describes people who openly self-identify as LGBTQ+ in their private, public, and/or professional lives "out of the closet." There are many states of being out; individuals can come/be out only to themselves, close friends, or everyone. Some transgender people prefer to use the term disclose (see *Disclosure*). It is not okay to "out" someone as this places individuals in unsafe situations and it is not someone else's story to tell. Sharing someone's LGBTQ identity may be done if you have their explicit and contextual consent.

**Pansexual:** A sexual orientation describing a person who is attracted to people of all gender identities (women, men, transgender etc.). People who are pansexual often say they are not focusing attraction on physical traits, but focusing on people's personalities instead.

**Passing**: The act of presenting as cisgender or gender-typical, which is generally accomplished through conforming to gender roles (see *Gender Roles*); not all trans people who conform to gender roles pass. People may try to pass in anti-LGBTQ+ environments to ensure their safety. Passing is not required, nor a goal for all LGBTQ+ people. People


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with cisgender/heterosexual passing privilege may not easily recognize their unearned privileges.

**Penectomy:** A surgical procedure to remove the penis from someone Assigned Male At Birth (AMAB).

**Phalloplasty:** A multi-stage procedure to form the creation of a penis.

**Polyamorous**: A term used to describe people who have the desire for multiple consenting intimate relationships at the same time. Also referred to as "ethically non-monogamous," "polya" or "polyam;" there is a movement away from shortening polyamorous to "poly" since Poly already means Polynesian. Consent and transparency are key components of polyamorous relationships.

**Positive**: Shorthand for being HIV+. In context, "I'm positive" is a disclosure of a person's HIV status. Refrain from asking a person's HIV status. It is never appropriate to share a person's HIV status without their explicit consent.

**Post-Op:** Abbreviation for Post-Operative. An adjective describing transgender or non-binary individuals who have had some or all of the gender-affirming surgery they desire. Be aware that this is a medical term and is considered offensive when used in non-medical situations, and is an in-group self-description. (ie. "Yeah, I'm post-op, I had top surgery last year). It is not ok to ask a transgender or non-binary individual about what surgeries they have had or want to have.

**Pre-Op:** Abbreviation for Pre-Operative. An adjective describing transgender or non-binary individuals who have not yet had some or all of the gender-affirming surgery they desire. Be aware that this is a medical term and is considered offensive when used in non-medical situations, and is an in-group self-description. (ie. "I'm pre-op right now, I am still talking to different surgeons to find out who takes my insurance.") It is not ok to ask a transgender or non-binary individual about what surgeries they have had or want to have.

**Preference**: People's sexual orientations are not preferences. A preference is a specific set of desires people have in romantic, emotional and/or sexual partners. People can have preferences (e.g. having a "type") in the people they become involved with. Preferences can be logistical (e.g. lives within a certain distance, not looking for a relationship) and interest based (e.g. likes to stay in, enjoys long walks on the beach). They can also be influenced by personal and systemic prejudices (e.g. not considering people whose gender expressions do not conform to conventional standards of that gender, people whose bodies are not conventionally attractive, or people with other marginalized identities). People can have their own preferences but should consider examining why they hold these preferences in order to make sure they are not reproducing inequalities.

**Pronouns**: The words used to refer to a person other than their name. Common pronouns are they/them, he/him, and she/her. Neopronouns are pronouns created to be


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specifically gender-neutral including xe/xem, ze/zir and fae/faer. For those who use pronouns--and not all people do--they are not preferred, they are essential to use consistently.

**PTP**: Acronym for Person with a Transgender Parent (see *Transpawn*)

**QTPOC**: Acronym for Queer and Trans People of Color. This term emphasizes the intersections (see *Intersectionality*) of race, gender, and sexual orientation.

**Queer**: A term used by some LGBTQ+ people to describe themselves and/or their community. Reclaimed from its earlier negative use—and valued by some for its defiance—the term is also considered by some to be inclusive of the entire community, and by others who find it to be an appropriate term to describe their more fluid identities. Historically a negative or pejorative term for people who are LGBTQ+, some people within the community dislike the term in all contexts. Due to its varying meanings, use this word only when self-identifying or quoting someone who self-identifies as queer (i.e. "My cousin identifies as queer"). Queer when used negatively or as a synonym for "bad" is disparaging and derogatory and is not ok.

**Queerbaiting**: A marketing technique in which media creators or executives allude to the presence of LGBTQ+ characters or relationships within their content, but fail to include actual representation so as not to lose non-LGBTQ+ viewers.

**Queerspawn**: A person with one or more LGBTQ+ parent or caregiver. This term is used for self-identification.

**Questioning**: Describes those who are in a process of discovery and exploration about their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or a combination thereof. Questioning people can be of any age, so for many reasons, this may happen later in life. Questioning is a profoundly important process, and one that does not imply that someone is choosing to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and/or queer.

**Real Life Experience:** A period of time that transsexual individuals are required to live full-time in the gender they identify with before healthcare professionals will approve gender-affirming surgery. For example, a male-to-female transsexual woman has to dress and live as a woman for a certain amount of time (usually 1 year) before being able to access gender-affirming surgery. This requirement varies by country.

**Same-Gender Loving (SGL)**: A term coined by Cleo Manago, and sometimes used by some members of the Black community or people of African descent, to express sexual orientation without relying on terms and symbols of European descent.

**Sapphic**: Drawn from the Greek lesbian poet Sappho's name, a term used to refer to lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, or otherwise same-gender loving (see *SGL*) women.


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**Scrotoplasty:** A surgical procedure to create a scrotum in someone who was Assigned Female At Birth (AFAB).

**Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS)/Sex Change Operation**
Out-of-date terms for genital surgery that are generally offensive to the transgender community. The appropriate term to use is gender affirming surgery.

**Sexual Orientation**: Emotional, romantic, or sexual feelings toward other people or no people (see *Asexual*). While sexual activity involves the choices one makes regarding behavior, one's sexual activity does not define one's sexual orientation. Sexual orientation is part of the human condition, and all people have one. Typically, it is attraction that helps determine orientation. Attraction and self-identification determines sexual orientation, not the gender or sexual orientation of one's partner.

**Social Construction Theory**: The idea that many of the institutions, expectations, and identities that we consider natural have been created and shaped by societies and people who came before us. Things that are socially constructed still have very real influences and consequences, even if they are not based in an inherent truth. Social constructs can be reconstructed in order to better fit the society and culture they govern.

**SOGI**: Acronym for Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity. It is typically used as a shorthand in writing and is rarely pronounced out loud.

**Standards of Care (SOC) for Gender Transition:** Typically known as Harry Benjamin Standards of Care (HB SOC) or the World Professional Association of Transgender Health Standards of Care (WPATH SOC), these are the most well-known set of guidelines used by healthcare professionals for the medical and mental health treatment of gender transition. The SOC are periodically updated and revised when new scientific information becomes available. They are not requirements, but suggested best practices.

**Stealth**: A term used to describe transgender or gender-expansive individuals who do not disclose their gender identity in their public and/or private lives (or certain aspects of their public/private lives). For example, a person might be tell their friends "I am stealth at my workplace."

**Stud**: A term for Black lesbians who take on a more butch (see *Butch*) or masculine role. Also known as ag/aggressive or butch. This term is not appropriate for non-Black lesbians to use. This is an in-group term. Often on a spectrum from butch to femme (see *Femme*) or stud to femme.

**Survival Sex**: Term for sexual activity performed in exchange for goods or services. Also known as transactional sex. Since LGBTQ+ people are more likely to be denied fair


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housing and employment, some may rely on sex to get them a place to sleep or the money they need.

**TERF**: Acronym for Trans Exclusionary Radical Feminist (pronounced "turf"). The term TERF originated online in 2008 from trans inclusive cisgender radical feminist blogger Viv Smythe; however exclusion of trans people--especially trans women--from feminist organizing spaces has been gaining traction since the 1970s. TERFs primarily believe that trans women are men trying to invade women's spaces, and work aggressively to deny the existence and identity of transgender people.

**TGNC**: Initialism for trans and gender nonconforming. An umbrella term for people who are not cisgender. It is pronounced T-G-N-C, but is more commonly written than spoken.

**Top Surgery**: Surgery performed on an individual's chest/breasts as a part of gender-affirming surgery. (See *Gender-Affirming Surgery*.)

**Trans-antagonistic**: Active hostility towards trans and gender-expansive people with the goal of enacting harm.

**Trancestors**: An informal term for trans elders, coming from a combination of the words "transgender" and "ancestors." The term highlights the fact that many trans people do not get to grow old, and celebrates intergenerational relationships. Trancestors can be well-known within the movement or personal to a community, filling a parent or grandparent-like role (see *Chosen Family*). Trancestors can make an impact during and after their lives, and prove that there is a long history of transgender people throughout the world.

**Transfeminine**: An AMAB person who is closer to femininity than masculinity but is not a cisgender woman. Often abbreviated to transfem or transfemme.

**Transgender**: Often shortened to trans, from the Latin prefix for "on a different side as." A term describing a person's gender identity that does not necessarily match their assigned sex at birth. Transgender people may or may not decide to alter their bodies hormonally and/or surgically to match their gender identity. This word is also used as an umbrella term to describe groups of people who transcend conventional expectations of gender identity or expression—such groups include, but are not limited to, people who identify as transsexual, genderqueer, gender expansive, gender diverse, non-binary or androgynous. Not everyone who identifies as transsexual, genderqueer, gender expansive, gender diverse, non-binary or androgynous also identify as transgender.

**Transmasculine**: An AFAB person who is closer to masculinity than femininity but is not a cisgender man. Often abbreviated to transmasc.

**Transmedicalism**: Also known as truscum, transmedicalists are people, both trans and cisgender, who believe gender dysphoria and the desire to medically transition are criteria to being legitimately trans.


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**Transmisogyny**: Misogyny directed against trans and gender-expansive women that often manifests itself in the form of prejudice and bias.

**Transmisogynoir**: Misogyny directed against trans and gender-expansive Black women, that often manifests itself in the form of prejudice and bias.

**Transphobia**: Animosity, hatred, dislike, or dismissal of trans and gender-expansive people that often manifests itself in the form of prejudice and bias. Transphobia can stem from lack of knowledge about transgender people and the issues they face and can sometimes be alleviated with education and support, and at other times transphobia is rooted in deeper ideological beliefs against trans folks. Transphobia may be expressed interpersonally and institutionally, may be directed at an individual or expressed generally.

**Transition**: A term used to refer to the process—social, legal, and/or medical—one goes through to affirm one's gender identity. This may, but does not always, include taking hormones; having surgeries; and changing names, pronouns, identification documents, and more. Many individuals choose not to or are unable to transition for a wide range of reasons both within and beyond their control. The validity of an individual's gender identity does not depend on any social, legal, and/or medical transition; the self-identification itself is what validates one's gender identity.

**Transpawn**: A person with one or more transgender or non-binary parent or caregiver. Typically, a term used for self identification only.

**Transsexual**: A term which refers to people who consider or use medical interventions such as hormone therapy or gender-affirming surgeries, or pursue medical interventions as part of the process of expressing their gender. A less frequently used—and sometimes misunderstood—term (considered by some to be outdated or possibly offensive, and others to be uniquely applicable to them). Some transsexual people do not identify as transgender and vice versa. Like the term queer, due to its varying meanings, use this term only when self-identifying or quoting someone who self-identifies as transsexual.

**Two-Spirit**: A term used within some Native American (AI) and Alaska Native (AN) communities to refer to a person who connects with both the masculine and feminine. These identities can encompass sexual, cultural, gender, and spiritual identities. The term, created in 1990, by a group of AI/AN activists at an annual Native LGBTQ conference is meant to provide unifying, positive, and encouraging language that emphasizes reconnecting to tribal traditions. Non-Indigenous people should not use this term.

**T4T**: Abbreviation of Trans 4 Trans. A trans or gender-expansive person who is only interested in emotional, romantic, intimate, and/or sexual partnerships with other trans people. It centers the beauty of being trans by celebrating the diversity of trans experience. T4T relationships allow trans people space from having to explain their genders or experiences to cisgender partners.


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**Vaginectomy:** A surgical procedure to remove the vagina.

**Vaginoplasty:** A surgical process which creates a vagina.

**Voguing**: A highly stylized, modern, street-style dance, stemming from New York City ballroom culture [particularly in neighborhoods-of-color in Harlem and the Bronx] in the late 1980s. Vogue was created and has been nurtured by Black and Latinx LGBTQ+ people inspired by Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphics, as well as poses found in Vogue Magazine.

**WLW**: Women Loving Women, refers to lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, or otherwise same-gender loving women (pronounced "W-L-W" or "wuh-luh-wuh"). Often used in communities of color, this specification grew from the historical notion that any woman who had emotional, romantic, intimate, and/or sexual partnerships with women as lesbians. As more understandings of sexuality have come to light, WLW has largely replaced lesbian as a unifying term to describe these women.

**WSW**: An abbreviation for Women Who Have Sex with Women. Reports on STIs and in public health commonly use this term, although those who identify as WSW may or may not identify as members of the LGBTQ+ community.

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